

Southlands School

Policy and Procedure

Digital & Distance Learning Policy

Safe School'
'Safe Pupils'
'Safe Staff'
'Safe Learning'

Policy and Procedure on Digital learning

Policy Author / Reviewer	Mark Gilbert
Approval Date	December 2020
Next Review Date	March 2021
Version No	1
Policy Level	Site Level
Staff Groups Affected	All Staff

1. Monitoring and Review

- 1.1.** The Proprietor will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date of approval shown above,
- 1.2.** Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

‘Establishment’ or ‘Location	this is a generic term which means the school/college.
Individual	means any child or young person under the age of 18 or young adult between the ages of 18 and 25.
Service Head	This is the senior person with overall responsibility for the service
Key Worker	Members of staff that have special responsibility for Individuals residing at or attending the Establishment.
Parent	means parent or person with Parental Responsibility
Regulatory Authority	Regulatory Authority is the generic term used in this policy to describe the independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services. E.g Ofsted, CQC, CSSIW
Social Worker	This means the worker allocated to the child/family. If there is no allocated worker, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	Placing Authority means the local authority/agency responsible for placing the child or commissioning the service
Staff	Means full or part-time employees of Cambian, agency workers, bank workers, contract workers and volunteers and students on placement.
CambianKPI	Means the Cambian online in-house information system which holds data for each site on quality measures.

Southlands School

Digital and Distance Learning Policy

Aim

To provide clear guidance to all stakeholders on our approach to digital and distance learning from September 2020 onwards (updated December 2020), outlining our general practice and adapted procedures for various scenarios, including students in self-isolation and a partial or full closure of the school during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We must appreciate that the ever changing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education could result in certain aspects of this policy becoming outdated, which is why it will be reviewed at least each term until the situation stabilises. From updated government guidance to unexpected changes to local settings and staffing. It is vital that we apply a degree of flexibility to our approaches of teaching and learning in school and remotely.

Whilst we will do our best to support the progress of all students at Southlands School during these times, our main priorities will always be the safety and wellbeing of all members of our community. There is no single, defined distance learning practice that is likely to meet the expectations of all stakeholders but through our dedicated research and established experience of remote education, we will remain committed to success for all of our students and support them with a range of approaches that we feel best meet their needs.

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Review

Date of this policy: September 2020

Date of last review: September 2020

Next review date: December 2020

Reviewed by: Mr Gilbert Head of Education

3. Government Guidelines

Below are some guidance documents that have influenced this policy with some key extracts shared.

Government: Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings

(Updated 14th December 2020)

[Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings)

Remote education may be an essential component in the delivery of the school curriculum for some pupils alongside classroom teaching, or in the case of a local restrictions.

All settings are therefore expected to plan to ensure any pupils educated at home for some of the time are given the support they need to master the curriculum and so make good progress.

They may consider it appropriate to suspend some subjects for some pupils in exceptional circumstances. Settings should be able to show that this is in the best interests of these pupils and this should be subject to discussion with parents. There should also be a coherent plan for returning to their normal curriculum for all pupils by the summer term 2021.

If a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate or a local restrictions requires pupils to remain at home, settings should have the capacity to offer immediate remote education. All pupils not physically unwell with coronavirus (COVID-19) but who are at home as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) should have access to remote education by the next school day.

Settings are expected to consider how to continue to improve the quality of their existing offer and have a strong offer in place for remote education provision. We recognise that some pupils with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and settings should work with families to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum, and that their teachers are best placed to know how the pupil's needs can be most effectively met to ensure they continue to make progress even if they are not able to be in school or college. Settings should work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education.

Where a pupil has provision specified within their EHC plan, it remains the duty of the local authority and any health bodies to secure or arrange the delivery of this in the setting that the plan names. However, there may be times when it becomes very difficult to do so, for example, if they are self-isolating. In this situation, decisions on how provision can be delivered should be informed by relevant considerations including, for example, the types of services that the pupil can access remotely, such as online teaching and remote sessions with different types of therapists. These decisions should be considered on a case-by-case basis, avoiding a one size fits all approach.

Government: COVID-19 contain framework: a guide for local decision-makers
[COVID-19 contain framework: a guide for local decision-makers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/covid-19-contain-framework-a-guide-for-local-decision-makers)

4. Online Systems

We use a range of online tools to enhance teaching and learning in school and remotely. Below are the key systems used by students and staff, and sometimes parents and carers too. Any device connected to the Internet can be used to access them via a web browser - Google Chrome is recommended for the best compatibility. Some also have apps that can be downloaded onto a mobile device for easy access.

	<u>Hegerty Maths</u> <i>Contact our Head of Education for access issues: mark.gilbert@cambianguroup.com</i>
What is it?	A specific maths intervention on line programme HegartyMaths
Who can access it?	All students and staff can login with their account. The username is the same as their school account.
How is it used?	Visit the link above on any device using a web browser

	<u>Zoom</u> <i>Contact our Head of Education for access issues: mark.gilbert@cambianguroup.com</i>
What is it?	Online video conferencing platform used to offer live on line learning.
Who can access it?	All students and staff can login with their school account.
How is it used?	Users can access live online lessons being offered by teachers.

	<u>Conquermaths</u> <i>Contact our Head of Education for access issues: mark.gilbert@cambianguroup.com</i>
What is it?	Online maths tuition and learning platform.
Who can access it?	All students and staff can login with their school account.
How is it used?	Users can complete bitesize interactive activities and complete tests.

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	Dynamic Learning <i>Contact our Head of Education for access issues: mark.gilbert@cambiagroup.com</i>
What is it?	Online learning platform which supports students with high quality content and learning tools.
Who can access it?	All students and staff can login with their school account.
How is it used?	Users can access interactive content and eTextbooks as well as completing exam style questions and sample answers and examiner content.

5. Online Lessons

Lessons can be delivered online via a range of methods or a combination of them. Examples include:

- Research tasks or assignments using resources shared by the teacher and submitted by the student
- Tasks or assessments on subject approved, external, online platforms such as Hegarty Maths or Oak National Academy. The teacher can monitor for progress checks and provide support and feedback.
- Pre recorded videos prepared by a teacher to deliver lesson content, instructions or feedback
- Live sessions that may include a video or audio stream and the opportunity to communicate with a teacher at a scheduled time.

We believe that a mixture of approaches, as outlined above, provide the most effective and flexible experience for all of our community, as feedback from our surveys supports. During changes to the standard educational provision, imposed by events such as a closure due to a pandemic, there will be expectations on how online lessons will be delivered. This is outlined further in the Part Closure and Full Closure Procedures later in this policy.

Where students are timetabled for extracurricular activities such as walks or cycling during the school day, and/or therapeutic interventions are offered by the Wellbeing Team there is an expectation that these sessions will still be offered. These sessions could be in the form of a pre-recorded session or offered live via an online platform. The most appropriate approach should be agreed between staff, students and parents/carers to guarantee that the student has access to their full educational and therapeutic offer.

- **Live Sessions**

There are a number of platforms available for hosting live video sessions all with advantages and disadvantages. Our preferred video conferencing tool is Zoom.

- There are serious safeguarding concerns that need to be considered for both staff and students' safety. We need to be aware of possible risks and we need to ensure that all users are taking precautions to manage their own privacy and the privacy of others.
- Staff and students must continue to follow the school's code of conduct during any virtual lessons or video recordings.
- Staff and students must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and where possible be against a neutral background.
- Only staff are permitted to set up a video meeting or lesson and this must be made through Southland School accounts.
- Only students who are invited to a video meeting or lesson may attend that session and they are not allowed to invite others in. They should enter the lesson with their camera turned off.
- There should never be a 1:1 video meeting between a staff member and student. If only one student attends a live lesson, it should no longer proceed.
- Where possible, any live sessions should be recorded by the member of staff only. They should be stored securely on the school account and not accessed by anyone else.
- A log should be kept by staff of the session's date, time, topic, and attendees
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time for the best interests of the teacher, students and family members and they are not expected to last a whole period. For example, an online lesson may last for 20 minutes as a check-in tool.
- Attendance for online sessions is compulsory however the school is considerate of access restrictions that may be in place and will work to support and resolve issues to optimise access to learning.
- We would ask staff to mark their own class work which should be forwarded via email or collated by the student to be marked when they able return to school.
- All staff should feel comfortable during the online learning and should report initially to the Head of Education if this is not the case. The Head of Education will consult with the DSL if required.
- Students who are not following the instructions should be locked out of the sessions and should be reported to the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), as soon as possible.
- Monitoring of student engagement will be recorded.

6. Non-digital Learners

As a school that strongly believes in the positive impact that effective use of technology can have on the development of a student and their future, we will in the first instance provide as much support as we can to any students or families with barriers to access. Where possible, we will loan equipment or devices to increase access.

Non-digital learners will receive printed work delivered or posted by the school. As we are trying to reduce the number of visitors on site, work cannot be collected or dropped off by students, parents or carers at this moment in time. Please contact the school to discuss how work completed can be returned to the school for teachers to mark and check progress.

Self-Isolation or Other Individual Absence

Students who are self-isolating or unable to physically attend a lesson for any other reason can still access work, resources and tasks linked to the current sequence of lessons by using subject schemes of work. Southlands School will contact students who are self-isolating or unable to attend and share relevant schemes of work and associated work.

Teachers will update their subject schemes of work regularly to ensure that all students inside and outside of school can still access the learning which is taking place. We have also provided clear guidance on the first page on how students can access the work and contact their teacher for support, how staff will be monitoring their progress and providing feedback and how we will provide work for those without digital access. We encourage all parents and carers to explore the schemes of work, guidance and resources shared to take an active role in their child's learning and development.

7. Partial Closure Procedure and Expectations

This refers to a partial closure for a year group or bubble of students and assumes staff are generally working from the school site, such as Tier 2 in the latest government guidance (COVID-19 contain framework).

Students will be split into three bubbles, secondary, primary and post 16, contact between these bubbles will not be allowed through the school day. If bubbles are required to share working spaces, facilities, or resources at different times during the day these facilities will need to be wiped clean in order to minimise possible cross contamination.

In this instance

- Staff will be asked to hold normal timetabled lessons online through Zoom during their teaching periods. Work should be sent via email and the lesson held as normal.
- It may not last for the entire lesson but should be a minimum of 20 minutes to explain the work.
- The Head of Education will work with teams to determine a schedule for recordings and live content where necessary.
- Work should be set in line with the scheme of work currently being studied.
- The school has a very limited number of devices in school which may be loaned out where possible.
- The school marking policy will be followed in this instance:
 - staff will ensure students receive some feedback regularly
 - written/typed feedback on marked work within three weeks

8. Full Closure Procedure and Alternative Timetables

In the event of a whole school closure the school will expect teaching and learning to follow the scheme of work as much as possible adhering to the student's current timetable. This timetable will be shared via email to students, parents and carers.

Online lessons can use a variety of methods as explained previously in this policy but there will be an expectation of some live lessons weekly in all subjects. This is shown in more detail below.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All staff

- should be available to work and leaders will be mindful of their workloads and differing situations at home

Head of Education

- plan who can teach when on the agreed school full closure timetable,
- ensure that teachers' needs are taken into account.
- monitor the access to content and overall progress

Teaching staff

- set tasks and update the submissions log
- share resources via email which may include links to other subject specific platforms
- follow live session protocols shared earlier in this policy ensuring that the student engagement log is completed appropriately.
- monitor student engagement with tasks and track progress
- provide regular feedback and responses to student queries
- provide written/typed feedback to marked work within 3 weeks in accordance to marking policy. This also includes any work returned by non-digital learners.
- work should be differentiated for students needs
- run support sessions as scheduled on the timetables
- tutors to make wellbeing calls to students and update student logs to make other staff aware of any issues or extra differentiation and support required.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary.

Date of this policy: December 2020

Date of next review: April 2021

Reviewed by: Mr M Gilbert Head of Education

Signature of Headteacher:..... Date:.....

Signature of Chair of Governors:..... Date:.....